



**The Secretary of Energy**  
Washington, DC 20585

November 18, 1994

The Honorable John T. Conway  
Chairman  
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board  
Suite 700  
625 Indiana Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On September 27, 1994, the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board issued Recommendation 94-4, dealing with deficiencies in Criticality Safety at the Oak Ridge Y-12 Plant. The Department accepts the recommendation.

The Department has initiated actions to resolve nuclear criticality safety and conduct of operations deficiencies at the Y-12 Plant. Shutdown nuclear operations will not resume until all necessary corrective and compensatory measures are in place. The Assistant Secretary for Defense Programs has provided, under separate cover, a plan detailing specific requirements for restart of operations, as well as a report explaining how the deficiencies remained undetected.

In addition, the Department will develop an implementation plan to: 1) evaluate compliance with Operational Safety Requirements and Criticality Safety Approvals; 2) comprehensively review the Y-12 Plant's nuclear criticality safety program; 3) assess the current level of conduct of operations at the Y-12 Plant; 4) evaluate the experience, training, and performance of key Department of Energy and contractor personnel involved in safety-related activities at the Y-12 Plant; and 5) correct any identified deficiencies.

We will work closely with you and your staff to develop a responsive Implementation Plan. The Implementation Plan will be forwarded to you in accordance with 42 U.S.C. § 22864. The Implementation Plan will provide specific milestones for accomplishing the commitments described in the preceding paragraph.

Sincerely,

  
Hazel R. O'Leary